

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 080061 TOSEC 030030
ORIGIN NODS-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 080061 TOSEC 030030

NODIS

FOR WISNER TO DELIVER TO THE SECRETARY

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 4209 ACTION CAIRO AND SECSTATE
MAR 28.

QUOTE: S E C R E T TEL AVIV 4209

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: EG, IS, PBOR, XF

SUBJ: LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER BEGIN TO PRESIDENT SADAT

1. BEGIN HAS ASKED THAT WE TRANSMIT FOR HIM TO
PRESIDENT SADAT A LETTER DATED MARCH 28 WHICH IS IN
REPLY TO SADAT'S LAST LETTER TO HIM OF MARCH 10. HE
HANDED ME THE TEXT OF THE LETTER DURING ANOTHER MEETING
ON MARCH 28.

2. BEGIN MADE A SPECIAL POINT OF CALLING MY ATTENTION
TO THE FACT THAT THIS BRIEF LETTER IS NON-POLEMICAL IN
TONE, AND THAT HE HAS ESCHEWED MORE THAN A PASSING
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 080061 TOSEC 030030

REFERENCE TO HIS EARLIER DEBATES WITH SADAT "OVER
QUOTATIONS." OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, THE LETTER HAS NO
SUBSTANCE, AND MERELY REPEATS AGAIN HIS CALL FOR A
RENEWAL OF THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEE MEETINGS.
I HAVE THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT IT IS INTENDED ONLY
TO GIVE A PUBLIC INDICATION THAT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN
HIM AND SADAT HAS NOT BEEN BROKEN OFF, AND THAT ANY MORE

SERIOUS COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE EGYPTIANS AND THE ISRAELIS AT THIS POINT IS PASSING THROUGH THE PRIVATE WEIZMAN-GAMASY CHANNEL WHICH REMAINS OPERATIONAL VIA ISRAELI STAFF ATTACHED TO THE MILITARY COMMITTEE AND STILL RESIDENT IN CAIRO.

3. TEXT OF BEGIN'S LETTER IS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF MARCH 10.

MAY I BEGIN BY SAYING THAT IN MY PREVIOUS REPLY TO YOU I WOULD HAVE MUCH PREFERRED NOT TO HAVE ENTERED INTO MATTERS OF QUOTATIONS. HOWEVER, IT WAS NATURALLY MY DUTY TO RESPOND TO CERTAIN CONTENTIONS YOU VOICED. BUT THIS EXCHANGE RELATES TO THE PAST AND OUR CONCERN MUST BE TO CARE FOR THE FUTURE.

WITH REGARD TO MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE, I CANNOT AGREE, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT THE ARGUMENTATIONS I CITED IN MY LETTER TO YOU OF MARCH 5 ARE "LEGALISTIC." I LISTED SEVERAL FACTS WHICH ARE OF THE UTMOST PERTINANCE TO OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS. ONE CONCERNS THE CHARACTER OF THE SIX DAY WAR WHICH WAS THRUST UPON ISRAEL AND WHICH ISRAEL WAGED IN ABSOLUTE CONFORMITY WITH ITS INHERENT RIGHT OF LEGITIMATE NATIONAL SELF-DEFENSE. IT DID SO IN FACE OF A DIRECT THREAT NOT ONLY TO ITS INDEPENDENCE BUT ALSO TO ITS VERY EXISTENCE.

I STATE THIS, MR. PRESIDENT, NOT FOR THE SAKE OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 080061 TOSEC 030030

LEGALISTIC POLEMICS BUT AS A SUBSTANTIVE CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF RIGHT AND WRONG, JUST AND UNJUST. YOU WILL RECALL THAT DURING OUR ISMAILIA MEETINGS I MADE REFERENCE TO THIS MATTER FOR THE SINGLE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING THE FUTURE COURSE OF OUR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

IT IS IN THIS SPIRIT THAT I COMMUNICATE WITH YOU NOW.

YOU WRITE TO ME, KINDLY, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT YOU REMAIN READY TO RECONVENE THE TALKS IN THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMITTEES. I SUGGEST THAT THEY INDEED BE RESUMED TO CONSIDER THE MATTERS ON THE AGENDA. THUS, THE EFFORT ITSELF TO ESTABLISH PEACE WILL BE RENEWED FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR TWO PEOPLES AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE GREAT GOAL FOR WHICH WE WORK INCESSANTLY, NAMELY THE NORMALIZATION OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

YOURS SINCERELY, MENACHEM BEGIN. END QUOTE.

4. ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION TO AMBASSADOR EILTS DELIVERING THE LETTER TO SADAT PURELY AS TRANSMISSION BELT TO FACILITATE CONTINUING CONTACT. LEWIS
UNQUOTE COOPER

SECRET

NNN

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